

## CLAIMS:

1. A method of selecting stored video programs ( $S_i$ ) in which, together with the video programs ( $S_i$ ) their running time ( $t_{Di}$ ) and, if necessary, an information item ( $I_i$ ) about the content, for example the genre, are stored, wherein, on the basis of a specified time duration ( $\Delta T$ ), those video programs ( $S_n$ ) are automatically selected from the stored video programs ( $S_i$ ) whose running time ( $t_{Dn}$ ) multiplied by any applicable compression factor ( $C_n$ ) is shorter than or equal to the specified time duration ( $\Delta T$ ).  
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2. A method of selecting stored video programs ( $S_i$ ) in which, with video programs ( $S_i$ ), their running time ( $t_{Di}$ ) and, if necessary, an information item ( $I_i$ ) about the content, for example the genre, are stored, wherein, on the basis of a specified time duration ( $\Delta T$ ) up to a subsequent video program ( $S_F$ ) having specified transmission start ( $t_{F0}$ ) and an anticipated transmission end ( $t_{FE}$ ), those video programs ( $S_n$ ) are automatically selected from the stored video programs ( $S_i$ ) whose running time ( $t_{Dn}$ ), multiplied by any applicable compression factor ( $C_n$ ) is shorter than or equal to N times the specified time duration ( $\Delta T$ ), where N is between 1 and 2 and wherein the subsequent video program ( $S_F$ ) is played back with a time offset and in a compressed form so that the anticipated transmission end ( $t_{FE}$ ) of the subsequent video program is adhered to.  
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3. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein combinations of a plurality of video programs ( $S_n$ ) are automatically selected, wherein the sum of the running time ( $t_{Dn}$ ), multiplied by any applicable compression factor ( $C_n$ ) of each video program ( $S_n$ ) in the combination is shorter than or equal to N times the specified time duration ( $\Delta T$ ) where N is between 1 and 2.  
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4. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein, on the basis of an information item ( $I_B$ ) specified by a user, those video programs ( $S_G$ ) are selected from the selected video programs ( $S_n$ ) whose content information ( $I_G$ ) corresponds to the user's requirement ( $I_B$ ).  
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5. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein, on the basis of an information item ( $I_F$ ) of the subsequent video program ( $S_F$ ), those video programs ( $S_G$ ) are selected whose content information ( $I_G$ ) corresponds to the information ( $I_F$ ) of the subsequent video program ( $S_F$ ).

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6. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the stored video programs ( $S_i$ ) contain at least one compression factor ( $C_i$ ).

7. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the compression factor ( $C_i$ ) of a video program ( $S_i$ ) is applied during the storage of the video program ( $S_i$ ). ..

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8. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the compression factor ( $C_i$ ) of a video program ( $S_i$ ) takes place in a separate run after the storage of the video program ( $S_i$ ).

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9. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the user enters an identification code.

10. A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the video programs ( $S_i$ ) are selected as a function of parameters assigned to the identification code.

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11. A method as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the parameters assigned to the identification code contain a selection of permissible content information items ( $I_i$ ).

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12. A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein a user's inputs are stored together with the identification code.

13. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the video programs ( $S_i$ ) are selected as a function of the absolute time.

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14. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the applicable compression, if any, of the video programs ( $S_i$ ) takes place as a function of the running time of the video program ( $S_i$ ).

15. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the video program ( $S_i$ ) is compressed as a function of the information ( $I_i$ ) about the content, for example the genre, of the video program ( $S_i$ ).

5 16. A playback device (1) for video programs ( $S_i$ ) having at least one memory device (5) for the video programs ( $S_i$ ) and their running times ( $t_{Di}$ ), furthermore having a control unit (12) for the selection of those video programs ( $S_n$ ) from the stored video programs ( $S_i$ ) whose running time ( $t_{Dn}$ ), multiplied by any applicable compression factor ( $C_n$ ) is shorter than or equal to N times a specified time duration ( $\Delta T$ ), where the factor N is  
10 between 1 and 2.

17. A playback device (1) as claimed in claim 16, wherein an input unit (11) is provided for the input of the time duration ( $\Delta T$ ).

15 18. A playback device (1) as claimed in claim 16, wherein a memory device (7) for information ( $I_i$ ) about the content, for example the genre, of the video programs ( $S_i$ ) is provided that is connected to a control unit (12) for the selection of those video programs ( $S_n$ ) from the selected video programs ( $S_n$ ) whose content information ( $I_G$ ) corresponds to a user's requirement ( $I_B$ ).

20 19. A playback device (1) as claimed in claim 16, having a memory device (8) for at least one compression factor ( $C_n$ ) assigned to the video programs ( $S_i$ ).

20. A playback device (1) as claimed in claim 16, wherein an input unit (11) is  
25 provided for the entry of a user identification code.

21. A playback device (1) as claimed in claim 16, wherein a database (13) is provided for the storage of an entered time duration ( $\Delta T$ ) associated with an identification code and, if necessary, input ( $I_B$ ) of an information item ( $I_i$ ) about the content of the video  
30 programs ( $S_i$ ).

22. A playback device (1) as claimed in claim 16, wherein a summing unit (16) is provided, which summing unit (16) is connected to the control unit (12).

23. A playback device (1) as claimed in claim 16, wherein at least one compression device (14) is provided for the compression of the playback of a video program (S<sub>i</sub>).

5 24. A playback device (1) as claimed in claim 16, wherein a device (15) is provided for selection of the method of compression of the video programs (S<sub>i</sub>).

25. A playback device (1) as claimed in claim 16, wherein at least one memory device (17) is provided for the temporary storage of video signals during playback.

10 26. A playback device (1) as claimed in claim 16, wherein a timer (18) is provided that is connected to the control unit (12).